

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

Application for Official Plan Amendment OP 23-06-1 – Township of Blandford-Blenheim

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Community Planning

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Oxford County Council adopt the Drumbo Secondary Plan prepared by MHBC;
2. And further, that Oxford County Council approve Application No. OP 23-06-1, initiated by the Township of Blandford-Blenheim, to amend the Official Plan with respect to the implementation of the Drumbo Secondary Plan;
3. And further, that Council approve Amendment No. 304 to the County of Oxford Official Plan and the necessary By-law to be raised.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Official Plan Amendment will implement the recommendations of the Drumbo Secondary Plan.
- The proposal is consistent with the relevant policies of the Provincial Policy Statement and supports the strategic initiatives and objectives of the Official Plan, and can be supported from a planning perspective.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

This application will be implemented in accordance with the relevant objectives, strategic initiatives and policies contained in the Official Plan.

Financial Impact

The approval of this application will have no financial impact beyond what has been approved in the current year's budget.

Communications

The Township of Blandford-Blenheim has initiated an amendment to the Official Plan to implement changes proposed through the completion of the Drumbo Secondary Plan.

The Township held a public information meeting on December 8, 2021, where residents and interested parties were presented with three options for the redesignation of select lands within the Village of Drumbo, including minor rounding out of the settlement boundary. Feedback from the public information meeting was collected and utilized to inform the final draft of the secondary plan.

Subsequent to the December 2021 public information meeting, three separate reports were brought to Township Council for the consideration of endorsing the draft Drumbo Secondary Plan (October 19, 2022, January 11, 2023, and March 15, 2023). Township Council endorsed the draft Drumbo Secondary Plan at their meeting on March 15, 2023, and directed staff to prepare the application for Official Plan Amendment with a view to implementing the policies outlined in the Drumbo Secondary Plan.




For Council's information, the Township of Blandford-Blenheim held a public meeting to consider the proposed Official Plan Amendment on September 20, 2023 and Township Council recommended support of the amendment.

2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Council approved the [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#) on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council's vision of "Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future." These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendations in this report support the following strategic goals.

Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
Promoting community vitality	Enhancing environmental sustainability	Fostering progressive government
<p>Goal 1.1 – 100% Housed</p> <p>Goal 1.2 – Sustainable infrastructure and development</p> <p>Goal 1.3 – Community health, safety and well-being</p> <p>Goal 1.4 – Connected people and places</p>	<p>Goal 2.2 – Preserve and enhance our natural environment</p>	<p>Goal 3.2 – Collaborate with our partners and communities</p> <p>Goal 3.4 – Financial sustainability</p>

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

Owner: Township of Blandford-Blenheim
47 Wilmot Street South, Drumbo, ON N0J 1G0

Location:

The subject lands include all lands within the Village of Drumbo.

Proposal:

The Township of Blandford-Blenheim has initiated an amendment to the Official Plan to implement changes proposed through the completion of the Drumbo Secondary Plan.

The Secondary Plan for the Village of Drumbo was initiated in 2020. Council provided budgetary approval for the project and planning and engineering staff proceeded to retain a consulting team to undertake the necessary background work to support the review and, if required, redesignation of lands within the Village of Drumbo.

MHBC Planning Ltd. (MHBC) was retained as the consultant on the project. As part of the Secondary Plan exercise, MHBC considered and evaluated the following:

- The alignment of the existing Village Area Boundary to ensure that properties are not improperly being fragmented (i.e., that the boundary does not bisect individual properties or existing buildings and structures).
- Projected growth forecasts prepared for the County, as well as servicing forecasts were reviewed to determine if the available capacity and available vacant land in the settlement meet the population projections.
- The existing land use designations in the Official Plan were also reviewed and considered when developing land use designations and related policies for the Village.
- The existing lot fabric and road network were reviewed to determine potential new collector roads in the undeveloped areas of the Village, and to plan for active transportation.
- Establishing some site-specific policies for the vacant lands within the Village, while considering public input, existing identified constraints and the availability of municipal services.

This Amendment applies to all lands currently located within the existing Village of Drumbo settlement boundary. The Village of Drumbo currently comprises of approximately 130.8 ha (323.3 acres). In addition to the lands currently within the settlement boundary, the proposal would also see approximately 12.1 ha (30 acres) brought into the settlement boundary with a view to rounding and refining boundary lines. The lands brought into the settlement boundary are primarily located in the southeast and northeast areas of the settlement.

Plate 1 – Location Map, illustrates the extent of the designated boundary of the Village of Drumbo.

Plate 2 – Aerial Photography (2020), provides an aerial view of the Village of Drumbo.

Plate 3 – Drumbo Secondary Plan Lands, provides the proposed land designations for the Village.

Plate 4 – Transportation Network Plan, provides the existing and conceptual transportation links within the Village of Drumbo.

Plate 5 – Servicing Plan, identifies the phasing approach for development within the Village of Drumbo.

Comments

2020 Provincial Policy Statement

Section 1.1.2 of the PPS directs that sufficient lands shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 25 years.

Section 1.1.3 further states that the vitality and regeneration of settlement areas is critical to the long-term economic prosperity of our communities. It is in the interest of all communities to use land and resources wisely, to promote efficient development patterns, protect resources, promote

green spaces, ensure effective use of infrastructure and public service facilities, and minimize unnecessary public expenditures.

Section 1.1.3.1 states that Settlement Areas will be the focus of growth and development.

Section 1.1.3.2 states that land use patterns within Settlement Areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:

- efficiently use land and resources;
- are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion;
- minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency;
- prepare for the impacts of a climate change;
- support active transportation;
- are transit-supportive, where transit is planned, exists, or may be developed; and,
- are freight supportive.

Section 1.1.3.8 states that a planning authority may identify a Settlement Area or allow for the expansion of a Settlement Area boundary only at the time of a comprehensive review and only where the need for expansion has been demonstrated in accordance with the criteria as contained in Section 1.1.3.8.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, Section 1.1.3.9 of the PPS directs that municipalities may permit adjustments of Settlement Area boundaries outside a comprehensive review provided:

- there would be no net increase in land within the Settlement Area;
- the adjustment would support the municipality's ability to meet intensification and redevelopment targets established by the municipality;
- prime agricultural areas are addressed in accordance with 1.1.3.8 (c), (d) and (e); and,
- the Settlement Area to which lands would be added is appropriately serviced and there is sufficient reserve infrastructure capacity to service the lands.

Further, Section 1.3.2.1 states that planning authorities shall plan for, protect, and preserve employment areas for current and future uses and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs.

Section 1.3.2.6 directs that planning authorities shall protect employment areas in proximity to major goods movement facilities and corridors for employment uses that require those locations.

Section 1.3.2.7 states that planning authorities may plan beyond 25 years for the long-term protection of employment areas provided lands are not designated beyond the planning horizon identified in Section 1.1.2 of the PPS.

Official Plan

Section 4.1 of the County Official Plan outlines the strategic approach when considering growth management. It is directed that appropriate areas be identified and designated in order to accommodate the growth within the projected planning period of the Official Plan. It is the objective of the County to preserve existing prime agricultural areas and environmental resources. Existing designated land supplies and infrastructure shall be efficiently utilized, including the achievement of intensification targets, prior to designating new areas for growth.

Section 4.1 further outlines that sufficient servicing levels for designated growth areas shall be established, which will allow a variety of land uses, promote efficient land utilization, and minimize potential impacts on environmental and agricultural resources. Public servicing to accommodate urban level growth shall be required. New development will only be considered where adequate servicing capacities exist.

Section 6.1 of the Official Plan speaks specifically to the strategy for rural settlements within the County. In order to accommodate anticipated rural growth, the location of non-agricultural uses within rural settlements is promoted as a means of protecting agricultural lands and natural areas, avoiding scattered and strip development and maximizing the efficiency of municipal services where they exist.

Rural settlements shall provide opportunities to develop a variety of housing in order to meet the needs of residents, including ownership and rental housing, affordable housing, and specialized housing where appropriate servicing levels are provided.

Infill development and intensification of land and buildings within the County's rural settlements, where the appropriate levels of services exist, shall be promoted. It is directed that infill and intensification shall be complementary to existing development within the rural settlements.

The policies of the Official Plan are intended to promote rural settlements as service centres for the rural community and rural economy. The policies provide for employment opportunities through the establishment of areas for a variety of industrial and commercial land uses including policies to support village core areas. The Official Plan also includes initiatives to support the creation of small business and home-based enterprises in rural settlements.

The draft Drumbo Secondary Plan proposes to add policies complementary to the Service Commercial designation to support the development of village convenience commercial uses that will provide convenience commercial uses to serve the residents and employees of the Village in close proximity to their homes and places of employment, with a view to facilitating more complete communities and neighbourhoods. These specific commercial policies are not intended to compete with the planned function of the Village Core, but rather, complement and supplement the core area. It is intended that buildings associated with this designation will address the street and parking shall be encouraged to be located at the rear of buildings to enhance the streetscape and create a more walkable community.

The draft Plan also proposes to add a 'Future Urban Growth' designation within the settlement. Lands designated Future Urban Growth are within the settlement boundaries, however, based on population projections, the lands are not required at this time to accommodate projected residential growth and are beyond the servicing capacity planned at this time. Until such time as

the County and Township identify the need for the lands and identify the adequacy of servicing capacity for additional residential lands, the interim land use shall be agricultural uses as they existed on the date of approval of the Secondary Plan and subsequently, the proposed Official Plan amendment. No expansions or additions to the agricultural uses shall be permitted within the Secondary Plan boundary area. This shall also apply to other existing land uses that existed as of the date of the approval of the Secondary Plan.

Agency Comments

Bell Canada has indicated that they are primarily interested in changes to the transportation network and/or policies and regulations relating to the direction of population growth and public infrastructure investments, heritage character, urban design, broadband and economic development related objectives and how Bell can assist Drumbo to be a connected community. Bell has reviewed the information provided, and would be pleased to provide the following comments in order to plan and facilitate the expansion of telecommunications and broadband infrastructure.

Moving forward, Bell Canada would like to continue to ensure that the landowners are aware and familiar with our conditions as they pertain to forthcoming Site Plans, Draft Plans of Subdivision and/or Draft Plans of Condominium as follows:

The Owner acknowledges and agrees to convey any easement(s) as deemed necessary by Bell Canada to service this new development. The Owner further agrees and acknowledges to convey such easements at no cost to Bell.

The Owner agrees that should any conflict arise with existing Bell Canada facilities or easements within the subject area, the Owner shall be responsible for the relocation of any such facilities or easements at their own cost.

The Owner is advised to contact Bell Canada at planninganddevelopment@bell.ca during the detailed utility design stage to confirm the provision of communication/telecommunication infrastructure needed to service the development.

It shall be noted that it is the responsibility of the Owner to provide entrance/service duct(s) from Bell Canada's existing network infrastructure to service this development. In the event that no such network infrastructure exists, in accordance with the Bell Canada Act, the Owner may be required to pay for the extension of such network infrastructure.

If the Owner elects not to pay for the above noted connection, Bell Canada may decide not to provide service to this development.

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), Oxford County's Public Works Department, Southwestern Public Health, and the Thames Valley District School Board have indicated no concerns to the proposal.

Public Consultation

In addition to the public consultation relating to the secondary planning exercise, notice of complete application specific to the proposed Official Plan Amendment was provided on July 12, 2023, and notice of public meeting was provided on August 30, 2023, in the Ayr News, in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act.

Planning Analysis

The purpose of the Secondary Plan is to provide a planning framework to guide the future development of Drumbo until 2046. The Secondary Plan builds on the policies established in the Provincial Policy Statement and the County Official Plan in order to provide direction for the complete and orderly development of the community and to accommodate a significant portion of the projected residential and employment growth for the Township of Blandford- Blenheim over the planning timeframe.

The proposed Secondary Plan includes general and specific land use and development policies, as well as urban design policies for the Village and its public spaces and streets. It is the purpose of the Plan to establish the land use patterns and conceptual identification of community infrastructure, such as trails, parks and collector roads that are anticipated through future draft plan of subdivision and other planning applications.

Staff are of the opinion that the policies detailed within the Plan will assist in guiding development in Drumbo in a manner that integrates new development with the existing community, while broadening the range of housing choice, making efficient use of existing and planned infrastructure, and diversifying the supporting land uses.

The Secondary Plan was developed based on the following:

- Policy Analysis including a detailed review of the applicable elements of the Provincial Policy Statement, the County of Oxford Official Plan and growth projections produced through the Phase One Comprehensive Review of Oxford County Report produced by Hemson Consulting Ltd (March 2020);
- A recognition that there is limited existing sanitary servicing capacity and a planned expansion to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) that will provide additional capacity during the planning horizon of the Secondary Plan;
- Drumbo accommodating a significant portion of the Township's future growth as one of two Settlement Areas with full municipal services and in consideration of the planned expansion of the WWTP;
- A projected need for the Township to accommodate 600 new residential units, with a significant portion of the planned growth accommodated within the Village of Drumbo, with an estimated land need of 35 gross hectares;
- A projected need for the Township to accommodate approximately 22 gross hectares of employment land and additional lands to accommodate commercial and institutional uses;
- The need to provide for a range of housing choice, including multiple residential units;
- Support for active transportation;
- The existing land use framework established in the County Official Plan and the existing development patterns and road networks in the Village;

- Establishing appropriate transitions between residential and employment land uses to ensure their compatibility;
- Opportunities for intensification and redevelopment, where appropriate; and,
- The need for appropriate public open spaces, including parks, to serve the existing and anticipated residents of the Village.

This Amendment applies to all lands currently located within the existing Village of Drumbo settlement boundary. The Village of Drumbo currently comprises approximately 130.8 ha (323.3 acres). In addition to the lands currently within the settlement boundary, the proposal would also see approximately 12.1 ha (30 acres) brought into the settlement boundary in order to complete minor refining of the village boundary. The lands brought into the settlement boundary would be located in at the southeast and northeast boundaries of the village.

Low Density Residential

The County Official Plan currently permits a minimum density within the Low Density Residential (LDR) designation of 15 units per hectare (6 units per acre) and a maximum of 22 units per hectare (9 units per acres). The Drumbo Secondary Plan proposes that lands designated LDR within the Village of Drumbo be developed at a minimum density of 18 units per hectare (7 units per acre) and a maximum of 25 units per hectare (10 units per acres).

A variety of housing forms will be permitted within the LRD designation including single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, duplexes, additional residential units (ARUs), and townhouses. Development within the LDR designation shall generally not exceed three storeys in height.

It is the intent of the Drumbo Secondary Plan to promote a mix of housing forms within proposed residential neighbourhoods. New development applications (subdivisions, site plans, etc.) shall generally require a minimum of 20% of the new residential units that are other than single detached dwellings or semi-detached dwellings.

Medium Density Residential

The County Official Plan permits a minimum density within the Medium Density Residential (MDR) designation of 22 units per hectare (9 units per acre) and a maximum of 50 units per hectare (20 units per acre). The Drumbo Secondary Plan proposes that the lands designated MDR within the Village of Drumbo be developed at a minimum density of 26 units per hectare (10+ units per acre) and a maximum of 50 units per hectare (20 units per acre).

Within the MDR designation, new low density housing forms such as single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, and duplexes will not be permitted. Medium density housing forms such as townhouses, cluster houses, and low-rise apartment buildings will continue to be permitted within the MDR designation at densities prescribed above. Development within the MDR designation shall generally not exceed a height of four storeys.

Future Urban Growth

The draft Drumbo Secondary Plan proposes to designate a portion of the Village 'Future Urban Growth (FUG).' These lands, while within the settlement boundary, are not yet required to accommodate projected residential growth based on current population projections.

Until such time as the County and Township identify the need for the lands and identify the adequacy of servicing capacity for the additional residential lands in Drumbo, the interim land use shall be agricultural uses as they existed on the date of approval of the Secondary Plan/Official Plan Amendment.

No expansions or additions to the agricultural uses will be permitted within the FUG designated area. This restriction shall also apply to other land uses that existed as of the date of the approval of the Secondary Plan.

Village Core

Current policies governing the Village Core designation in the County Official Plan permit a mix of residential and commercial opportunities. All forms of low density and medium density residential development are currently permitted. Changes to the Village Core designation are proposed to concentrate commercial uses within the centre of the Village and to limit residential development to that which is complimentary to the planned function of the core.

The draft Drumbo Secondary Plan proposes that no new single detached dwellings be permitted within the Village Core. Further, while live-work units are encouraged, ground floor residential uses will not be permitted within the Village Core where the lands are adjacent to Wilmot Street and Oxford Street. The Secondary Plan also includes a policy that would implement a maximum height of four storeys within the Village Core designation.

Current Village Core policies allow for a full range of retail, office, administrative, and public utility uses. Cultural, entertainment, recreational, cottage industry, and institutional uses are also permitted. The draft Drumbo Secondary Plan maintains these permitted uses while also specifically listing the following uses:

- Medical clinics;
- Restaurants (dine in or take-out, not including drive-through facilities);
- Bakery;
- Café or Coffee Shop;
- Hotel;
- Dwelling Units above the First Storey;
- Museum;
- Financial Services; and,
- Personal Services

While commercial uses are intended to be directed to the Village Core, there are some commercial uses that are not generally compatible with the pedestrian oriented nature of the village centre. As such, it is proposed that drive-through establishments be prohibited from the

Village Core. Car-focused establishments will generally be directed towards the Service Commercial designation.

Service Commercial

The draft Drumbo Secondary Plan proposes to maintain current permitted uses as contained within the Official Plan. The Secondary Plan, however, proposes to include new policies that would help guide the orientation of buildings within the Service Commercial designation. The policies encourage orienting the buildings away from adjacent residential uses. Specifically, HVAC equipment, loudspeakers, drive-through aisles, and other potential sources of noise/odour will generally be directed away from adjacent, sensitive land uses.

Service Commercial uses that require large areas for storage of goods or vehicles may include a limited amount of retail commercial uses that cannot be accommodated in the Village Core. These retail uses are not intended to be those typically characteristic of a Village Core location and shall not directly compete with the function of the Village Core.

It is the intent of the Secondary Plan that newly developing Service Commercial areas have direct access to arterial roads. Given the current servicing constraints in the Village of Drumbo, the draft Secondary Plan identifies low water and wastewater uses as being preferred within the Service Commercial designation.

Village Convenience Commercial

Staff are recommending the inclusion of a specific subset of policies within the Service Commercial designation for 'Village Convenience Commercial' (VCC) development. VCC uses are intended to be complementary to Service Commercial and Village Core designated areas and include uses that would not detract from the planned function of those areas, while providing a range of uses that would serve local neighbourhoods. The Drumbo Secondary Plan identifies one site for proposed VCC use initially, and includes the following as permitted uses:

- Bakery;
- Café or Coffee Shop (does not include drive-through Restaurants);
- Child Care Centre;
- Personal Services;
- Pet Store and related services (does not include a Veterinary Clinic or Kennel);
- Take-out Restaurant (not including drive-through Restaurants); and,
- Variety Store (does not include Retail Commercial)

Industrial

Recognizing the servicing capacity constraints within the Village, the proposed policies affecting the Industrial designation provide that uses having low water and wastewater requirements as being preferred. The Industrial designation identifies uses such as fulfillment centres, business incubators, microbreweries, makerspace, and artisan studios as being permitted.

To ensure clarity in the proposed policies regarding the range of new industrial type uses proposed, a number of new definitions will be incorporated into the Official Plan specific to Drumbo, as follows:

- Fulfilment Centre - means an industrial facility used for, but not limited to, the assembly, storing, sorting, processing, packaging and distribution of goods, the management of inventory, and the temporary on-site storage of commercial motor vehicles or trailers for freight handling.
- Business Incubator - means an establishment that is dedicated to nurturing the development and commercialization of start-ups, early-stage companies, and established companies (enterprises) by providing incubator services such as management training, networking facilities, programming, mentorship programs, business assistance services, and office space.
- Makerspace - means a community workshop or community studio that is dedicated to nurturing creativity, collaboration, and hands-on learning through the provision of shared do-it-yourself space where like-minded individuals can gather and interact together:
 - Create (make, build), invent, tinker, explore, learn; and
 - Share ideas, resources (tools, materials), knowledge and skill sets.
- Microbrewery – means the use of a building for the small-scale production of beer, wine, cider and/or spirits which may be in conjunction with a tasting bar, but shall not include a restaurant.

Servicing and Phasing

It is the intent of the Secondary Plan that development in Drumbo will only proceed at such time as servicing capacity becomes available. It is recognized that the Village currently has limited sanitary servicing capacity. An expansion to the Drumbo Wastewater Treatment Plan (WWTP) has been approved, and will be implemented in a two phased approach. Once the WWTP is expanded, it is anticipated that there will be additional capacity to support approximately 330 equivalent residential units.

The anticipated growth for the Township as a whole over the planning horizon is 600 additional units. The majority of those units should be accommodated within the two Serviced Villages of Drumbo and Plattsville. The Environmental Assessment prepared for the expansion to the WWTP facility in Plattsville indicated that this settlement is anticipated to accommodate approximately 137 units, with the remainder of the growth to be accommodated via development in Drumbo and to a lesser extent, other areas of the Township.

The PPS directs that growth occur within fully serviced Settlement Areas (such as Drumbo), as a priority and affords limited opportunities for new residential development outside of fully serviced Settlement Areas. In this regard, the Secondary Plan has been developed with a view that the majority of the growth within the Township will occur within the Village of Drumbo.

In recognition that the development of all the lands within the Settlement Area will not be accommodated within the limitations of the existing and planned WWTP capacity, the Secondary Plan includes Phasing Policies and a Phasing Plan to ensure the orderly development of the lands within the Village and to ensure the expansion of municipal services occurs in a financially responsible and equitable manner. The intent of the Phasing policies is to ensure that development takes place in a fiscally responsible manner that minimizes risk to the Township and

County and to ensure that the cost of development is borne by proponents of development applications, where appropriate.

Transportation

As part of the Official Plan Amendment, a new schedule is being added to the County Official Plan with a focus on the transportation network within the Village of Drumbo. The schedule outlines both existing roads and conceptual roads within the Village transportation network with a view to providing connectivity among the various areas of Drumbo.

CONCLUSIONS

The Official Plan Amendment (OPA) attached to this report has been prepared in accordance with the recommendations of the Drumbo Secondary Plan and addresses matters pertaining to land use, transportation, and municipal servicing. Staff are of the opinion that the OPA is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and supports the strategic initiatives and objectives of the Official Plan and are recommending support of the OPA.

Further, the Drumbo Secondary Plan, which forms the basis of the Official Plan Amendment, is recommended for adoption County Council.

SIGNATURES

Report author:

Original Signed By

Dustin Robson, MCIP, RPP
Development Planner

Departmental Approval:

Original Signed By

Gordon K. Hough, RPP
Director of Community Planning

Approved for submission:

Original Signed By

Benjamin R. Addley
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Plate 1 – Location Map
- Attachment 2 - Plate 2 – Aerial Photography (2020)
- Attachment 3 - Plate 3 – Drumbo Secondary Plan Lands
- Attachment 4 - Plate 4 – Transportation Network Plan
- Attachment 5 - Plate 5 – Servicing Plan
- Attachment 6 - Drumbo Secondary Plan
- Attachment 7 - OPA 304